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SUBJECT: TRAFFICKING TRAINING FOR IMAMS AND LAWYERS

¶1. (U) Summary. In an innovative training program on investigating and prosecuting human trafficking cases, the Embassy provided training to imams and human rights lawyers to help them understand what law enforcement needed in order to prosecute trafficking cases. End Summary.

Trafficking Prosecution Course =====

¶2. (U) Fifteen participants representing the Imam Training Academy and lawyers from human rights groups met from April 5 to 8 in Dhaka for a course on "Investigative and Prosecutorial Techniques for Human Trafficking Cases." Designed by the Resident Legal Advisor and the Assistant Legal Advisor, the interactive course gives trainees a case study and asks them to develop an investigation plan. The same course was taught in July and August last year to prosecutors and police officers from one-third of the country's districts.

¶3. (U) An FBI Special Agent instructs students in how to exploit leads through techniques such as consensual recorded phone calls, interviewing methods, and different types of searches. Throughout the investigative portion of the course, participants are reminded to consider how they would use the evidence at trial. There are several lectures devoted to prosecutorial techniques such as preparing witnesses and victims for trial, and examination methods and damage control from defense counsel's cross-examination.

An Innovative Approach: Reaching Imams and Human Rights Lawyers === =====

¶4. (U) For this course, Embassy reached out to new constituencies -- imams and human rights lawyers. The goal was to make them more effective partners of police and prosecutors in combating trafficking. The four imams selected by Imam Training Institute to participate and the institute's imam leader (together comprising one-third of the class) were not new to trafficking issues. Last year the institute received funding from the USAID through The Asia Foundation for a training program on trafficking focused on rehabilitating victims back into local society and techniques used by traffickers. The human rights lawyers were obviously well versed in trafficking issues but again, had no perspective on law enforcement. Imams came from Dhaka, Chittagong, Jessore and Rajshahi and the human rights lawyers, based in Dhaka, do work in cities throughout Bangladesh.

¶5. (SBU) The group actively pursued the leads provided in the case study and were generally quicker than previous

police and prosecutor participants in analyzing information and deciding on the next step in the investigation. A large segment of the course focused on interviewing techniques of victims, witnesses, and targets. The participants took the work seriously as seen in their lively discussions and reluctance to break up their work groups to take the one scheduled tea break.

The Multiplier Effect

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16. (SBU) The program's long term success depends on creating a pool of talented professionals who are keen to replicate the program in their communities. In the case of the imams, their assistance could be invaluable. In the four areas they represent, the imams run training centers and offered their facilities for joint trainings with police and prosecutors to facilitate field training. Moreover, as with all such programs, the daily contact and informal conversations amongst participants helped forge important relationships and contacts. The Imams were particularly impressed by the FBI Special Agent's experiences in the Civil Rights Unit of the FBI investigating trafficking, police abuse of citizens and hate crimes.

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